



## **Communicable Disease Branch Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Weekly Key Points**

**February 16, 2021**

The North Carolina Division of Public Health (NC DPH) Communicable Disease Branch will be releasing COVID-19 weekly key points that includes information discussed on the weekly Tuesday Local Health Department call. Recordings of the call will not be made available; please use the information below as a summary of the topics presented on the call. As guidance changes, please use the most recent information provided. For questions, contact the NC DPH Communicable Disease Branch 24/7 Epidemiologist on Call at **919-733-3419**.

### **Important Updates**

- **New:** NCDHHS\_LHD Weekly Webinar\_02.09.2021.pdf (file attached)
- **New:** NC COVID Report Guidance\_02182021.pdf (file attached)
- **Updated:** Local Health Vaccine FAQ - 2.12.21.pdf (file attached)
- **Updated:** Find My Testing Place (file attached)

### **State Epidemiologist Update**

- Continued decrease in all key COVID-19 metrics statewide
- More transmissible variants (including B.1.1.7) are being increasingly detected and will likely become predominant in coming weeks.
- CDC guidance on [quarantine post-vaccination](#) released last week – more information in section below.
- CDC [school guidance](#) also released last week. Good alignment with current NC guidance. Updates and additional information regarding NC school guidance coming out soon.

### **Infection Prevention Update**

**[Quarantine guidance for vaccinated persons:](#)** This guidance states that vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are **not required** to quarantine if they meet **all** the following criteria:

- a. Are fully vaccinated (i.e.,  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine) **AND**
- b. Are within 3 months following receipt of the last dose in the series **AND**
- c. Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.

These updated quarantine criteria **could be applied** to alleviate staffing shortages when considering work restrictions for fully vaccinated healthcare personnel with [higher-risk exposures](#) as a strategy to alleviate staffing shortages.



An important exception to the above guidance (no longer requiring quarantine for fully vaccinated persons) is that **vaccinated inpatients and residents in healthcare settings should continue to quarantine following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19**. The quarantine should be a 14-day period.

General public [Guidance regarding maximizing mask effectiveness](#): This guidance does not recommend double-masking routinely, but it does recommend specific measures to improve fit and recommends “adding layers” either by using a cloth mask that has multiple layers of fabric, **OR** wearing one disposable mask (sometimes referred to as a surgical mask or a medical procedure mask) underneath a cloth mask.

[Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel](#). This guidance expands options for source control and patient care activities in areas of **moderate to substantial transmission** to include use of: an N95 respirator **OR** a respirator approved under standards used in other countries that are similar to NIOSH-approved N95 filtering facepiece respirators **OR** a well-fitting facemask (e.g., selection of a facemask with a nose wire to help the facemask conform to the face; selection of a facemask with ties rather than ear loops; use of a mask fitter; [tying the facemask’s ear loops and tucking in the side pleats](#); [fastening the facemask’s ear loops behind the wearer’s head](#); use of a cloth mask over the facemask to help it conform to the wearer’s face).

\* NC DHHS has added a document under PPE on our website reviewing [guidance for voluntary use of respirators](#). Voluntary use is defined as use of a N95, KN95, or equivalent respirator for which you / staff are not fit-tested.

## **Vaccine Policy and Equity – Dashboard Updates**

- We’ve developed the [Survey for Organizations Interested in Hosting or Supporting Vaccine Events](#) – please share this link with organizations that are offering to help.
- We’ve developed a [survey](#) to request Vaccine 101 presentations
- Find My Group: <https://findmygroup.nc.gov/>
- NC COVID Vaccine Help Center - 1-888-675-4567
- Find a Vaccine Location: <https://myspot.nc.gov/map-view>

## **NC COVID Archiving**

NC COVID will start archiving negative COVID-19 events beginning the weekend of February 27. Archiving negative events will help to address several performance and processing issues within the NC COVID platform. Please see the attached document titled *NC COVID Report Guidance\_02182021.pdf* for further instructions.

## **Find My Testing Place**

Please review the updated ‘Find My Testing Place LHD’ Excel file weekly to ensure information is up to date and accurate. Please send the updated files or any related questions to [SVC\\_Covid-19TestingSites@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:SVC_Covid-19TestingSites@dhhs.nc.gov)